working to suggest and guide the task of achieving the goal of interlinking of rivers by the end of 2016.

(e) to (g) The Task Force will consider all opinion on efficacy and feasibility of the project and devise suitable mechanism for bringing about speedy consensus amongst the States and suggest various modalities for project funding etc.

Development of various spots in North Eastern Region

*12. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that detailed plans of development of tourism facilities in regard to Bhuban Hills in Gehar (Barak Valley), Kashipur in Silchar and Kamakhya Yatri Niwas at Guwahati are pending consideration with the Government;

(b) if so. the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for delay in sanctioning the project especially when funds therefor have already been earmarked; and

(d) by when the projects are likely to be cleared to facilitate their development as tourist resort?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) to (d) Position of these projects is as under:-

(i) Yatri Niwas at Bhuban Hills was sanctioned in 1997-98 for CFA of Rs. 18 lakhs. The project was dropped in consultation with the State Government.

(ii) Construction of Yatri Niwas at Khaspur was sanctioned in 1999-2000 for CFA of Rs. 18 lakhs. The State Government has reported that the project is 50% completed.

(iii) Construction of Pilgrim cottages at Kamakhya was sanctioned in 1992-93 for CFA for Rs. 27.09 lakhs. The project was dropped in conculation with the State Government.

(iv) A Pilgrim Centre at Kamakhya has been sanctioned in 1998-99 for CFA of Rs. 27.75 lakhs.

(v) A project for providing facilities for pilgrims at Kamakhya has been sanctioned for CFA of Rs. 80 lakhs in 2002-03.

Regulation of Foreign Exchange Reserves

† 13. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to further liberalise rules governing regulation of foreign exchange considering continuous inflow and vast reserve of foreign exchange;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether restrictions imposed on extension of facilities of exchange of rupee with foreign currency by banks to their customers has since been lifted; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) The Government has been progressively liberalising exchange controls over the last year. Further relaxation of controls would be based upon an assessment of both internal and external factors and the impact of national and international events on our reserves.

(c) and (d) The Rupee is not fully convertible to foreign currencies.

Renovation of Ranchi Airport

† *14. SHRI DEVDAS APTE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether ownership of land of Ranchi Airport rests with the Ministry of Defence;

(b) whether difficulties are being faced in renovation of the Airport due to this reason; and

(c) whether any correspondence has been made in this regard with the Ministry of Defence?

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.